

Primer becomes a Peace Symbol

ON FEBRUARY 8, 1967 fifteen friends met at our house to discuss "doing something" about the war in Vietnam. As we introduced ourselves around the dining room table each woman began rather defensively "I am not an organization woman." We weren't. We wanted to do something that would communicate our horror and disgust to our elected representatives in one concerted action. We knew the tone we wanted our protest to have. We were not "bearded sandalled youths," "wild eyed radicals" or dyed in the wool "old line freedom fighters" and we wanted the Congress to know that they were dealing with an awakening and enraged middle class-voters, precinct workers, contributors. We wanted them to know we could not be stowed away by any of the above clichés used to describe protesters at that time. We intended to be answered to by those men in Washington whom we paid with our tax dollars and whom we were convinced would respond the very moment they learned of our displeasure.

We decided to send a Mother's Day card to Washington. We would print and distribute one thousand—one thousand letters of protest that said in a very ladylike fashion "For my Mother's Day gift this year I don't want candy or flowers. I want an end to killing. We who have given life must be dedicated to preserving it. Please talk peace."

Lorraine had given our family an etching of *Primer* some months prior to that meeting. Its eloquent, irrefutable, sunflower truth said it for all of us. I called Lorraine and asked if we could use *Primer* on the face of the card. She said yes, and one thousand cards became two hundred thousand cards. And because of her genius "Another Mother for Peace" was born.

BARBARA AVEDON

Los Angeles, Mother's Day 1974.